

Our weekly community profile



Key play: Joan LeClair, owner of LeClair Launderette in Jacksonport, shows her grandson Cody, 19

months old, how to play an organ at the laundromat. Cody's parents are Pauline and Erik Leist.

Jacksonport residents like calm

By Karil Van Boxel

Press-Gazette

JACKSONPORT — Residents here call it the quiet side of Door County.

They take in stride the waves of tourists who swell the population of Jacksonport, on the Lake Michigan shore, each summer.

The tourists who come here are cottage people. They are summer residents who appreciate the relative quiet and beauty of the unincorporated community on Wisconsin 57. Many have come for years and retire here.

Memorial Day weekend is the exception. That's when Maifest brings 5,000 to

**Press-Gazette photos
by Joan Guthridge**

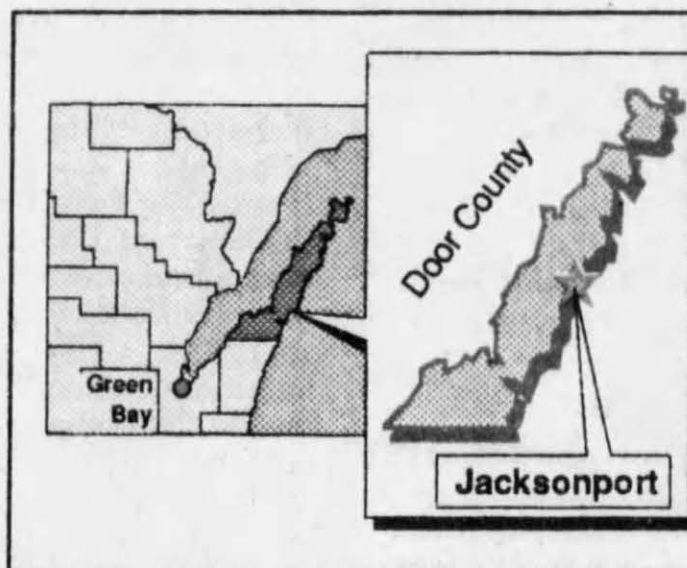
parades.

Started in 1973 by Carolyn Sachse, 2522 County F, and her late husband, the event is a major fund-raiser. "All the proceeds go into a civic program to make the community better," Sachse said.

Cottage dwellers are among the 280 members of the Jacksonport Advancement Corp., she said. The group has donated more than \$100,000 in park land, shelters, tennis courts and lighted baseball diamonds while defraying the cost of a new fire station-town hall.

"Summer is very, very busy and winter very quiet," Vi Tanck, owner of Vi's Grocery, 6318 Highway 57, said. "We need the summer business or we wouldn't be able to survive."

A town of Jacksonport native, Tanck



The Jacksonport file

- **Population:** About 110.
- **Name game:** Jacksonport got its name from Andrew Jackson, director of the Menasha land office, who helped form a small land company in 1867.
- **Home again:** Many summer cottage dwellers of this community along Lake Michigan retire here. Some well-known people have established temporary residence here, including former Gov. Patrick Lucey.

has spent the past 30 years making liver and breakfast sausage, brats and sultz, a German specialty. When the shell of the store burned three years ago, she rebuilt.

"If I retire, it will be right in this area," Tanck, 68, said. "I enjoy the people and I would miss them."

Across the street, LeClair Launderette boasts entertainment when owner Joan LeClair has time to play the organ. She started the business in 1964.

LeClair's husband, Bob, and son, Mike, are commercial fishermen.

In the early days, the community had three docks and a lot of commercial fishing, said Ben Olson, 84. People bought the land, cleared it and sold the wood, which was shipped from the local port to Milwaukee, Chicago and Racine.

"But when the docks went to pieces, nobody rebuilt them," said Olson, a former commercial fisherman and carpenter. Sports fishermen now can launch boats at Lakeside Park.

Jacksonport is a mixture of old and new. The Door to China restaurant once was the Green Bough and Ivanhoe's. The Square Rigger Lodge, offering 17 rooms and housekeeping units nine months of the year, was built in 1984.

The Rushes condominiums are here, along with Dave's Tree Service, three churches and seasonal businesses.

It is the third year the Episcopal Church of the Holy Nativity provides a weekly service at 5 p.m. Saturdays in winter. Longtime members appreciate the service despite any inconvenience.

"It gets a little chilly in the church sometimes," the Rev. Robert Meyer said.

Gene Kesson, 54, has owned Geno's restaurant and bar, 6269 Highway 57, for four years. He serves soup and sandwiches year-round.

"They're good people here — hard-working people," he said.

■ **Next week:** Pittsfield in Brown County



Shop talk: Vi Tanck stands in front of Vi's Grocery store in Jacksonport.



Wood work: George Stoneburner of Baileys Harbor dumps wood chips for Dave's Tree Service in Jacksonport.